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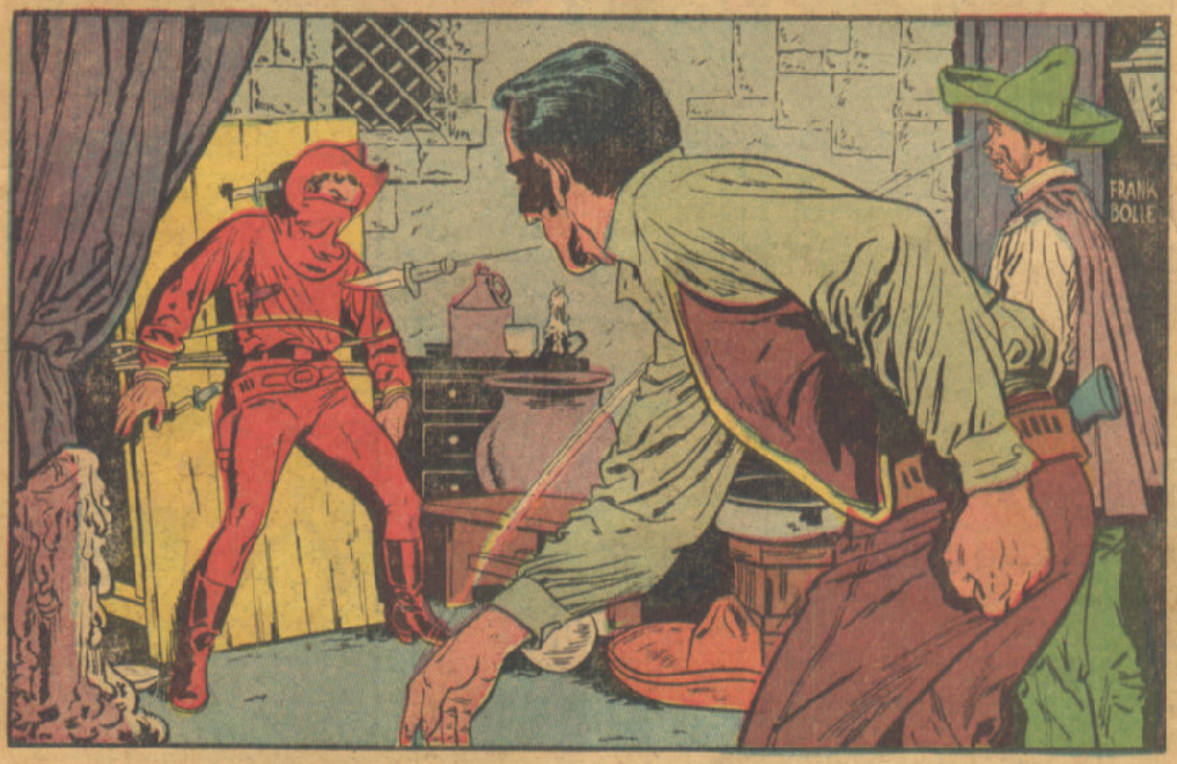
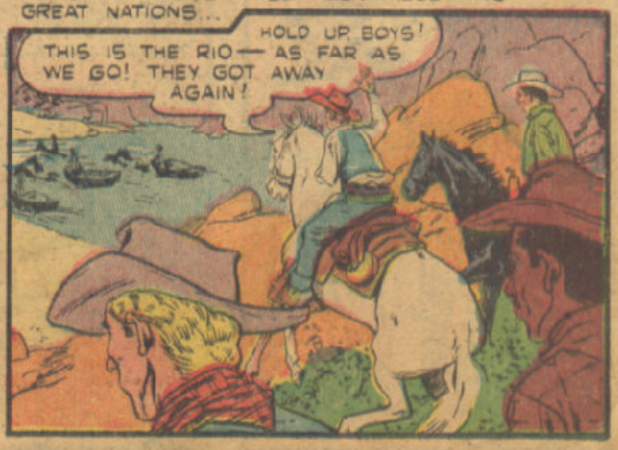
TIM HOLT

DON DIABLO THEY CALLED HIM ALONG THE BORDER COUNTRY— SIR DEVIL! FOR HE WAS A DEVIL, THIS MASKED AND CLOAKED RIDER WHOSE ARMED GANG RAIDED BOTH SIDES OF THE RIO GRANDE!

AND WHEN HE CAPTURED REDMASK AND THREW DEATH AT HIM IN THE FORM OF RAZOR-SHARP KNIVES, WHAT HOPE WAS THERE FOR THE MAN WHO FACED THE—

"DEVIL'S DEATH!"

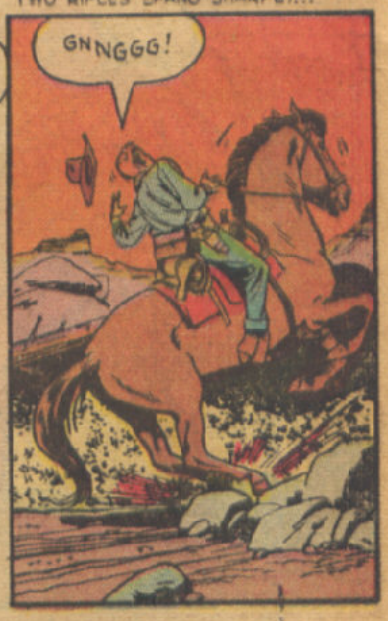




BUT ONE MAN — JIM LERNER, SHERIFF OF CANTINA — WORKS CAREFULLY, MAKING FRIENDS WITH THE PEONS...

WHEN HE HAS HIS EVIDENCE, HE RIDES OUT OF CANTINA TO FIND A FEDERAL MARSHAL...

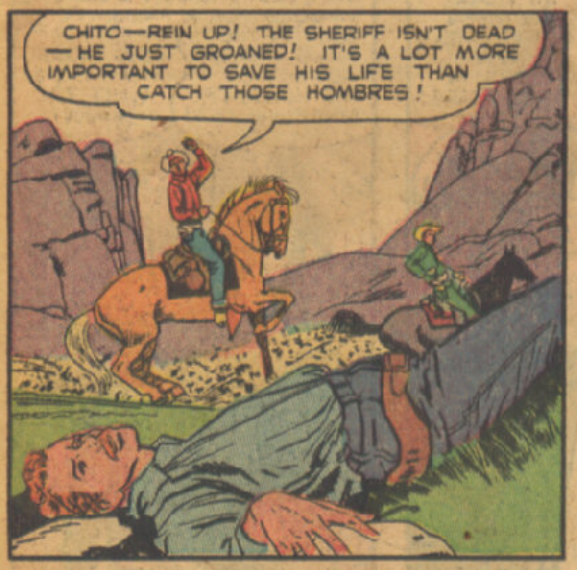
TWO RIFLES SPANG SHARPLY...

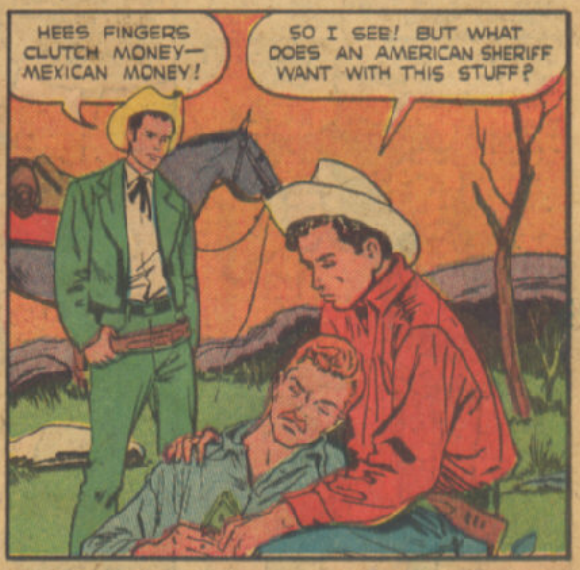


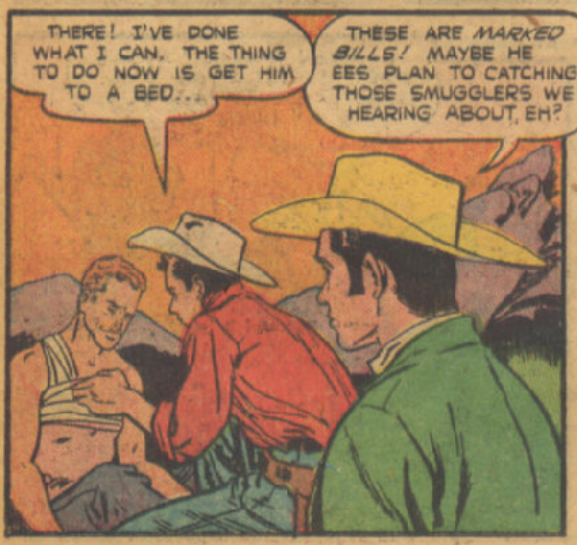
AGAIN A RIFLE CRACKS, AND DON DIABLO WHIRLS...

TIM HOLT

AT A PULSE-STUNNING GALLOP, TIM HOLT AND HIS PRAIRIELAND PARTNER, CHITO, THUNDER DOWN ON THE MASKED RIDERS...

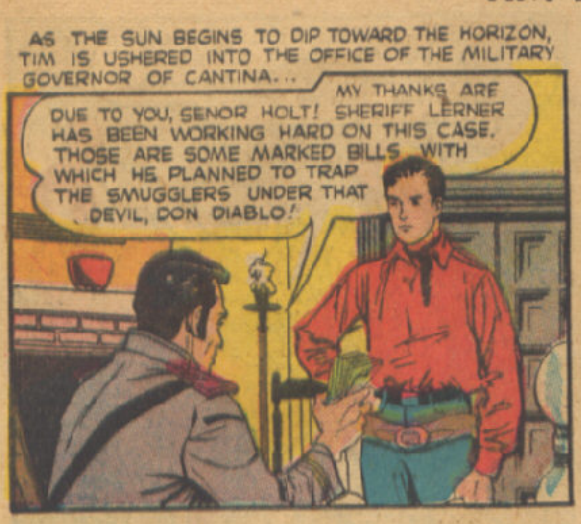






AN HOUR LATER, IN A LOCAL RANCH...

TIM HOLT


AS THE SUN BEGINS TO DIP TOWARD THE HORIZON, TIM IS USHERED INTO THE OFFICE OF THE MILITARY GOVERNOR OF CANTINA...
MY THANKS ARE DUE TO YOU, SENOR HOLT! SHERIFF LERNER HAS BEEN WORKING HARD ON THIS CASE. THOSE ARE SOME MARKED BILLS WITH WHICH HE PLANNED TO TRAP THE SMUGGLERS UNDER THAT DEVIL, DON DIABLO!

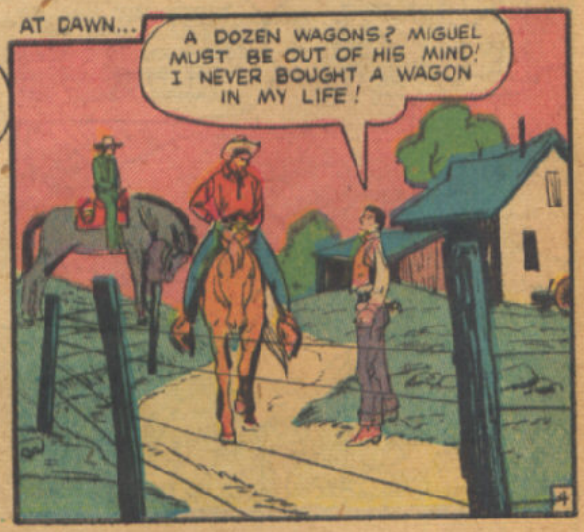
I'M A DEPUTY SHERIFF BACK IN BULLET, SIR. I'D LIKE TO TAKE OVER FOR LERNER. I'VE A CLUE THAT MIGHT BREAK UP THE CASE!
BY ALL MEANS, SENOR. WE CAN USE ALL THE HELP WE CAN GET!

AS DUSK CLOSES IN AROUND THE BORDER TOWN, TIM MOVES FROM SHOP TO SHOP...
BUT WHAT EES EET YOU ARE HOPE TO FINDING?
WAGONS, CHITO— NEW WAGONS!

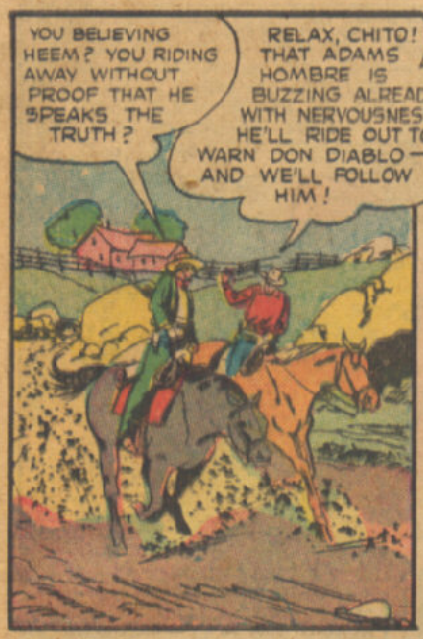
NEW WAGONS? POR DIOS— EES THEES A JOKE?
MY WORK HAS BEEN REPAIR, LATELY. NO NEW WAGONS IN THREE YEARS!

AS SHADOWS LENGTHEN IN THE STREET.
WHY, YES. I MADE A DOZEN WAGONS FOR A FREIGHTER BACK IN THE HILLS NAMED ADAMS! ON THE HONOR OF MIGUEL VALDEZ!
GOOD ENOUGH. IT'S WHAT I WANT TO KNOW!

BY MOONLIGHT, TWO MEN RIDE NORTH INTO THE HANGKNOT HILLS...
DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND, CHITO? WHOEVER IS DOING THAT SMUGGLING NEEDS WAGONS! SOMEBODY HAD TO MAKE THEM. ONCE I FIND THE MAN WHO BOUGHT THEM, HE'LL LEAD ME TO DON DIABLO'S HIDEOUT!


AT DAWN...
A DOZEN WAGONS? MIGUEL MUST BE OUT OF HIS MIND! I NEVER BOUGHT A WAGON IN MY LIFE!

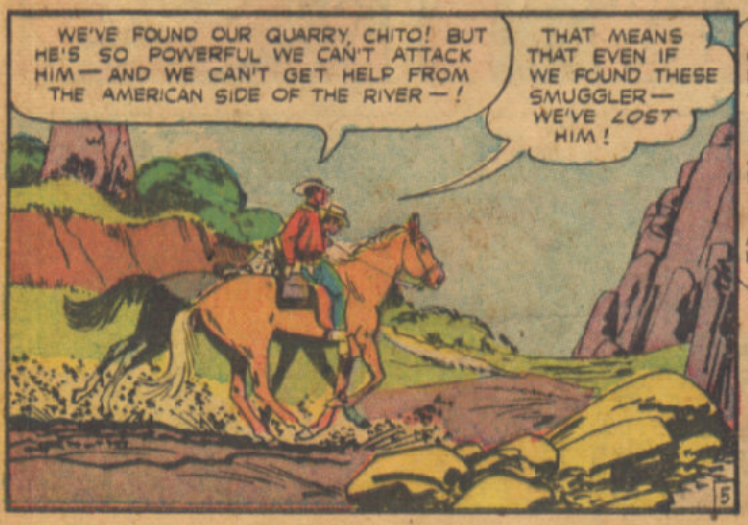
TIM HOLT



FOR YEARS THE OLD SPANISH FORT HAS STOOD AT EL LORO, ITS STONE BULK TOWERING ABOVE THE PLACID WATERS OF THE RIO GRANDE...

TO ITS MASSIVE OAKEN DOOR COMES FRANK ADAMS, RANCHER—

SOME DISTANCE AWAY...



TIM CHANGES COSTUME SWIFTLY...!

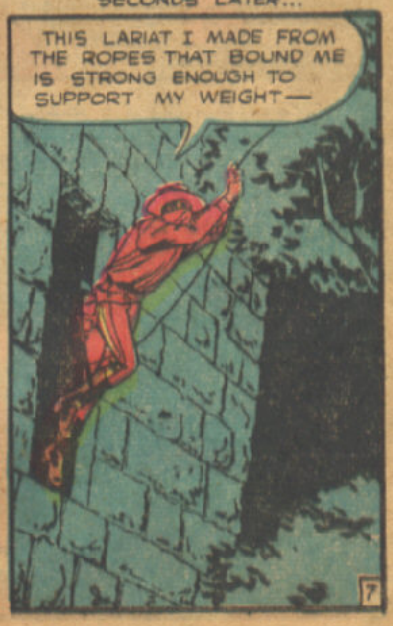
THE OLD ALARUM BELL, SILENT FOR MANY YEARS, BONGS LOUDLY ABOVE THE SQUARE OF THE VILLAGE OF EL LORO...
I MUST ROUSE THE PEONS AGAINST DON DIABLO! IT'S MY ONLY HOPE!
FRIENDS, YOU KNOW REDMASK OF OLD! I COME TO REVEAL DON DIABLO AS NO FRIEND, BUT AS AN ENEMY! HE USES YOU MEN TO DRIVE HIS WAGONS AND POLE HIS BOATS — BUT WHEN DANGER THREATENS HE'LL GIVE YOU TO THE LAW!
HE SMUGGLES GOODS FROM THE UNITED STATES AND PAYS FOR THEM WITH STOLEN MONEY! WHEN THE LAW CATCHES HIM — HE'LL ELUDE THEM — AND YOU MEN WILL GO TO JAIL!
DON DIABLO WILL GIVE MUCH GOLD TO KNOW THAT REDMASK OF THE RIO GRANDE SEEKS TO CAPTURE HIM!
LATER, AT THE CASTLE OF EL LORO...
SO! FIRST A DEPUTY SHERIFF NAMED TIM HOLT — AND NOW THIS REDMASK — SEEK TO TURN ME OVER TO THE LAW! CARAMBA! I RIDE MYSELF TO CAPTURE THIS UPSTART!
LIKE A TIDAL WAVE, DON DIABLO AND HIS RIDERS BURST INTO THE TOWN SQUARE...
THERE HE IS! AFTER HIM! A DOZEN GOLD COINS TO THE MAN WHO BRINGS HIM DOWN!

BEFORE HE CAN TURN, THREE RIDERS OVERTAKE HIM, AND REDMASK, —FIGHTING SAVAGELY— IS BORNE BACKWARD!

LESS THAN AN HOUR LATER...

WRITHING AND TWISTING AGAINST THE ROPES THAT HOLD HIM, REDMASK TOPPLES THE HEAVY TABLE. AS IT FALLS, THE BONDS SLIP JUST ENOUGH...

SECONDS LATER...



MOMENTS LATER, MOUNTED ON LIGHTNING, REDMASK LEADS THE ARMED PEONS TO THE ATTACK...

NO NEED TO ATTACK THE CASTLE NOW! DON DIABLO IS DOWN BY THE SHORE, SUPERVISING THE LAUNCHING OF THE WAGON BOATS!

SIR DEVIL CRIES OUT HOARSELY AT THE SIGHT OF THE GRIM RED MASK OF THE DREAD RIDER OF THE RIO!

DON DIABLO— I'VE COME FOR YOU!

REDMASK!

I'LL HAVE YOUR HEAD STUFFED AND MOUNTED AFTER I SLICE IT OFF YOUR NECK!

BIG TALK, DIABLO! GUARD YOURSELF—

SNATCHING UP A SWORD FALLEN FROM A RIDER'S NERVELESS FINGERS, REDMASK LEAPS TO THE ATTACK!

THE BATTLE HAS STOPPED BEHIND US, DIABLO! IF YOU FALL, MY PEONS SHALL WIN!

IF I FALL! NO MAN HAS EVER BESTED ME WITH COLD STEEL, REDMASK!

TALES ARE STILL BEING TOLD ALONG THE RIO GRANDE OF THAT FABULOUS DUEL! BACK INTO THE CASTLE, BACK UP THE STONE STEPS, BACK TO THE PARAPET OF THE CASTLE REDMASK FORCES DON DIABLO...!

TWO THRUSTS OF THE RAPIER, AND—

SENOR ALONZO DELLA ALFREDO— MILITARY GOVERNOR OF CANTINA— WHO IS ALSO **DON DIABLO!**

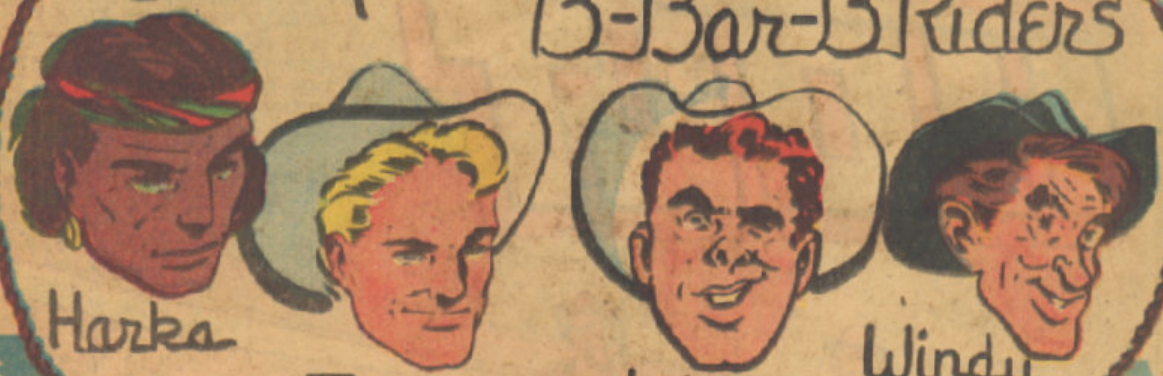
A WAILING CRY, A SHADOW AGAINST THE MOON—

I'LL NEVER FACE THE DISGRACE...

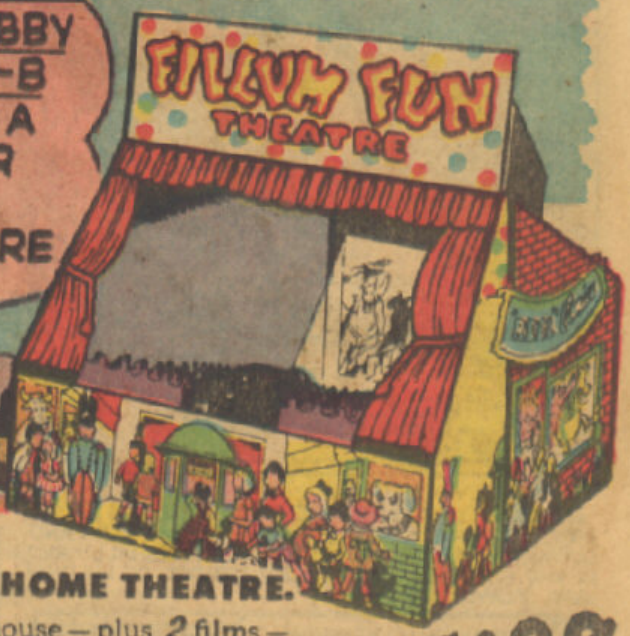
HE JUMPED—BEFORE I COULD STOP HIM! THE RIVER HE USED TO STEAL HIS WEALTH WILL BE HIS GRAVE...!

THE END

Bobby Benson's B-Bar-B Riders



HI, RIDERS! THIS IS BOBBY BENSON AND THE B-BAR-B RIDERS, INVITING YOU TO A PRIVATE SHOWING OF OUR ADVENTURES IN FILMS, IN YOUR OWN MOVIE THEATRE AT HOME!



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TIM HOLT

THEY RIDE UNARMED—WITHOUT A BULLET FOR THEIR GUNS—INTO THE HELL-FIRE OF AN OUTLAW CITY! THREE LAWMEN OF THE OLD WEST—*WILD BILL HICKOK! BAT MASTERSON! REDMASK OF THE RIO GRANDE!*—RIDING INTO DANGER TO GET THE MEN THEY SEEK—RIDING TO MEET THE CERTAIN DOOM OF ALL WHO COME UNASKED TO—

"ROBBERS ROOST!"

Wild Bill Hickock Redmask Bat Masterson

DODGE CITY! TRAIL'S END FOR THE DUSTY CATTLE DRIVES UP FROM TEXAS! HOME OF GAMBLER AND GUNMAN, STOREKEEPER AND TOWN MARSHALL—AND, IN THE SHADOWS OF ITS MAIN STREET, OF HOLD-UP MAN, *JOHN RINGO*...

SUDDENLY A COLT .45 ROARS...

TIM HOLT

SOME MILES WEST OF DODGE CITY, IN ABILENE, MARSHAL **WILD BILL HICKOK** STEPS INTO A STAGECOACH STATION HOLDUP...

AT THE DEAD RUN, **BUCKSKIN FRANK LESLIE** OF TOMBSTONE FLEES BEFORE THE ONCOMING HICKOK...

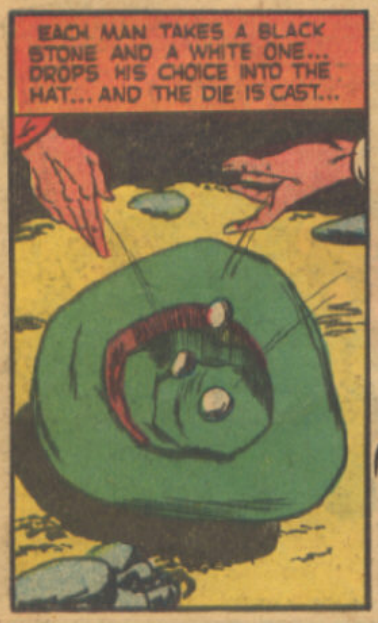
CLOSE TO THE ARIZONA BORDER, NEAR THE TOWN OF BULLET, THE TEXAS ROBBER, **SAM BASS** AND HIS GANG HOLD UP A UNION PACIFIC TRAIN CREW HELPLESS...

AT FULL GALLOP, THE RED RIDER OF THE RIO GRANDE CATAPULTS INTO THE MASSED GUNMEN...
YOU CAN HANDLE THEM NOW, SHERIFF! SAM BASS GOT AWAY, BUT I'M HITTING OUT AFTER HIM!
ACROSS THE SANDSTONE BARRENS, REDMASK TRAILS HIS MAN. AS NIGHT FLOODS THE WESTERN SAGELANDS...
BASS MUST HAVE PICKED UP A FRIEND!
WHAT...? IT'S NOT BASS AT ALL! WHY— YOU'RE WILD BILL HICKOK... AND— BAT MASTERSON!
TARNATION! YOU MUST BE REDMASK OF THE RIO GRANDE!
IN A MOMENT EXPLANATIONS ARE MADE...
I'M TRACKING DOWN SAM BASS FOR A TRAIN ROBBERY!
I'M AFTER BUCKSKIN FRANK LESLIE!
JOHN RINGO'S MY MAN!
...AND BY SUNUP, THREE FAMOUS MEN HEAD NORTH AND WESTWARD ACROSS THE SAGE FLATS.
BASS WILL HEAD FOR THE OUTLAW HIDEOUT NO LAWMAN HAS EVER FOUND—ROBBER'S ROOST!
ROBBER'S ROOST! THEY SAY THAT'S A TOWN RUN BY OUTLAWS— THAT NO HONEST MAN HAS EVER SEEN— AND LIVED!
RECKON THAT'S WHERE WE'LL FIND RINGO— AND LESLIE, TOO!

SOME MILES AWAY, ON A HIGH RIDGE OF VOLCANIC ROCK ALONG THE TRAIL...

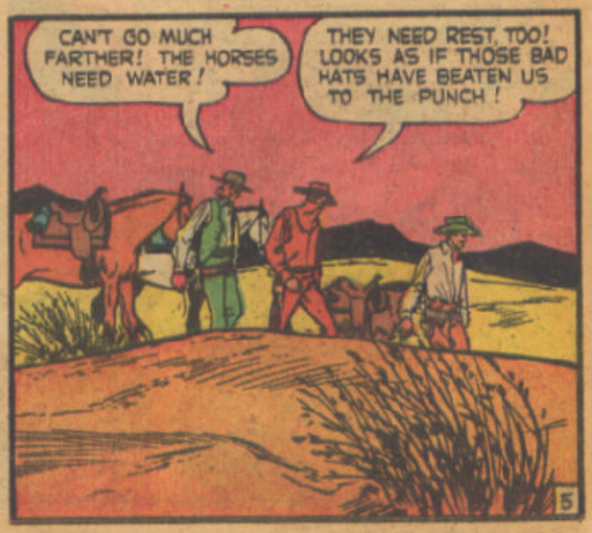
SOME HOURS AFTER...

LIPS TIGHTEN! EYES HARDEN! THESE MEN KNOW WHAT THEIR CHOICE MEANS! SILENTLY BAT MASTERSON BENDS AND PICKS UP HALF A DOZEN STONES.

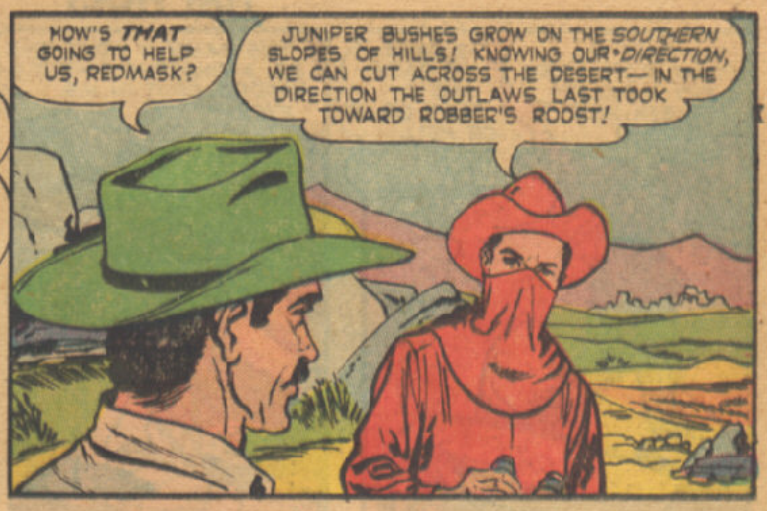


FAR AHEAD OF THE ONCOMING LAWMEN...

ALL THAT NIGHT, THE THREE LAWMEN MOVE ACROSS THE SANDS OF THE PAINTED DESERT. A FEW HOURS AFTER SUNUP...

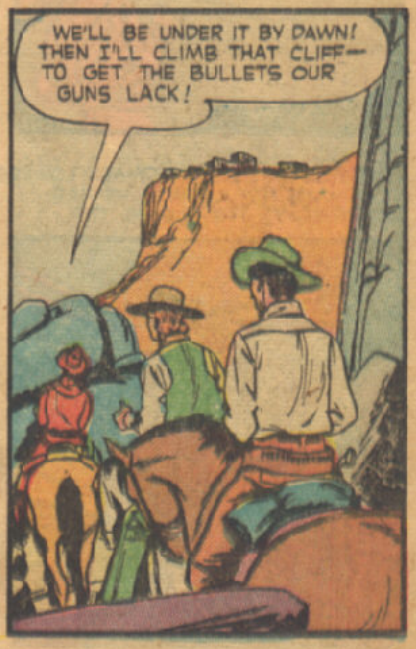


TIM HOLT



SOME HOURS LATER, THE BLAZING HEAT OF THE PAINTED DESERT GIVES WAY TO GRASSY SLOPES AND COLD MOUNTAIN STREAMS...

AN ABANDONED PUEBLO DWELLING, THE OUTLAW TOWN OF ROBBERS' ROOST, BROODS OVER THE VAST WESTERN WASTELANDS...



LIKE A LEECH, USING FINGERS AND TOES TO CLAW OUT HOLES IN THE POWDERY SAND OF THE CLIFF'S FACE, REDMASK CLIMBS HIGHER AND HIGHER...

ABOVE HIM—LIGHTED BY THE EARLY MORNING SUN...

MOMENTS LATER, REDMASK LOWERS THE KNOTTED LARIATS HE HAS CARRIED TO THE CLIFF'S TOP...

THEY AREN'T WASTING ANY TIME—HERE THEY COME!
WE CAN'T STAND UP TO ALL THESE GUNMEN—HUH! MAYBE WE CAN AT THAT!

WE'LL BLOW THEIR POWDER-HOUSE SKY-HIGH! WHILE THEY'RE PICKING THEMSELVES UP—WE'LL BE RAIDING THEIR CORRALS!

SECONDS LATER, THE CLIFFTOP SHAKES TO THE EARSHATTERING REVERBERATIONS OF GUNPOWDER EXPLODING!

AT THE CORRALS...
THESE ARE ALL THE RIFLES LEFT! THE REST BLEW UP IN THAT EXPLOSION!

SINCE WE HAVE ALL THE RIFLES ON THIS CLIFFTOP, AND SINCE A REVOLVER CAN'T SHOOT THIS FAR—NOT ONE OF THOSE OWLHOOTS CAN REACH THIS WELL—THE ONLY PLACE UP HERE WHERE THERE'S ANY WATER!

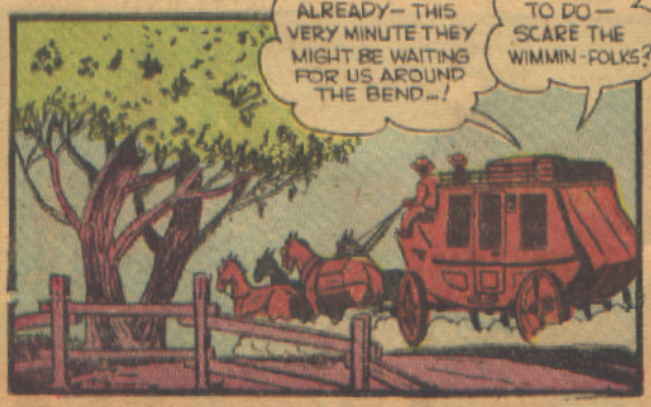
THE DESPERATE KILLERS HOLD OUT FOR TWO DAYS! BUT THE HOT ARIZONA SUN, AND THE SIGHT OF REDMASK DRINKING ALL THE WATER HE WANTS, IS TOO MUCH...
I CAN'T STAND IT NO MORE! I'M SURRENDERIN'!

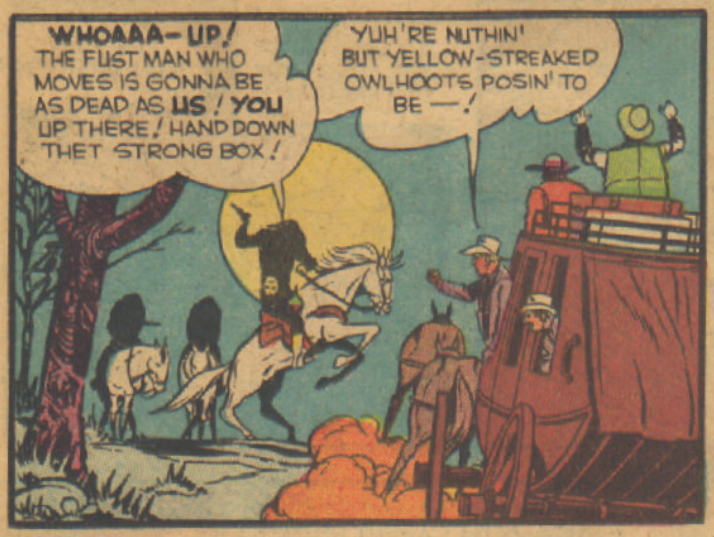
AND SO, THE THREE LAWMEN RETURN FROM THE MISSION TO ROBBERS' ROOST—NOT ONLY WITH THE MEN THEY SET OUT TO GET—BUT WITH THREE DOZEN MEN WANTED ALL OVER THE WEST...
THE END

TIM HOLT

THE GHOST RIDER

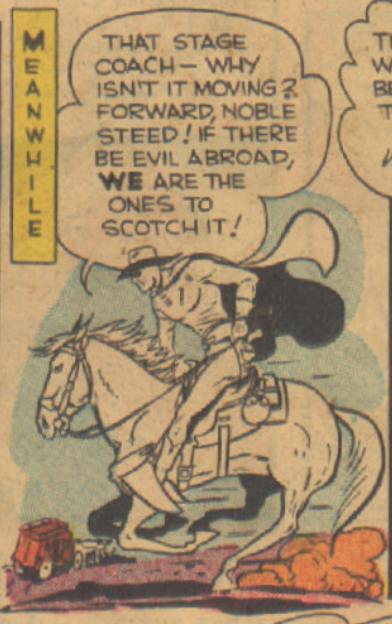
WERE THEY MEN OR DEVILS— THESE HORSEMEN WITHOUT HEADS WHO CAME RIDING OUT OF THE NIGHT? WERE THEY PERHAPS THE GHOSTS OF GUILLOTINED WRETCHES, RETURNED TO EARTH TO HOUND THE LIVING?... ONLY **THE GHOST RIDER** COULD UNRAVEL THE EERIE MYSTERY OF... "THE HEADLESS HORSEMEN!"



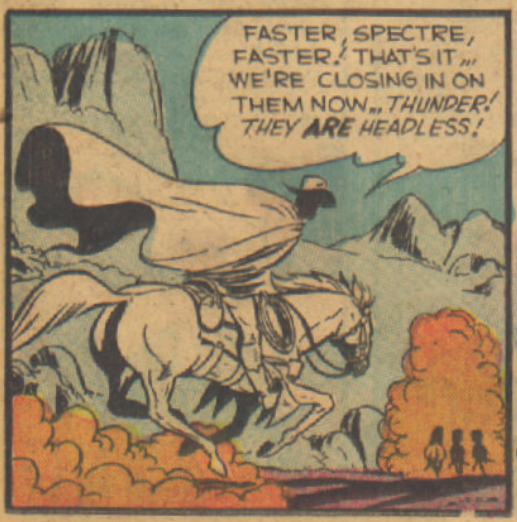

WHOAAA—UP! THE FIRST MAN WHO MOVES IS GONNA BE AS DEAD AS US! YOU UP THERE! HAND DOWN THET STRONG BOX!
YUH'RE NUTHIN' BUT YELLOW-STREAKED OWLHOOTS POSIN' TO BE —!

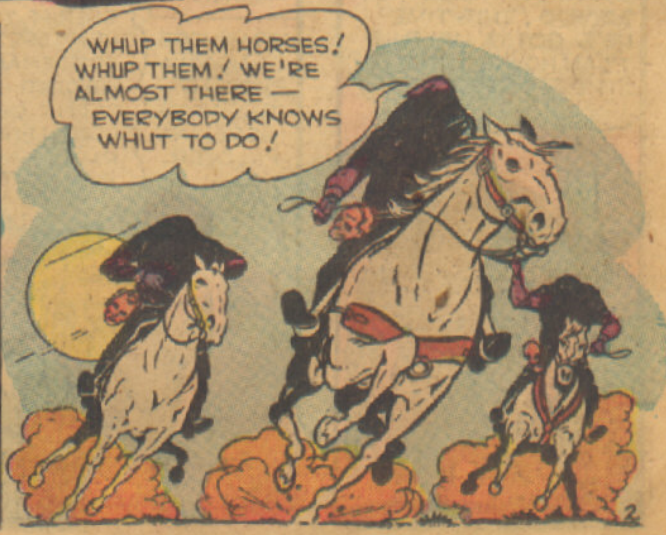
TAKE THET FOR DISBELIEVIN'! WE'RE GOLD-HUNGRY SPOOKS— THET'S WHUT WE ARE — WHO NEED THE GOLD TO SEAL OUR HEADS BACK ON! ANYBODY ELSE WANTA SAY WE AIN'T?
GNNNG!

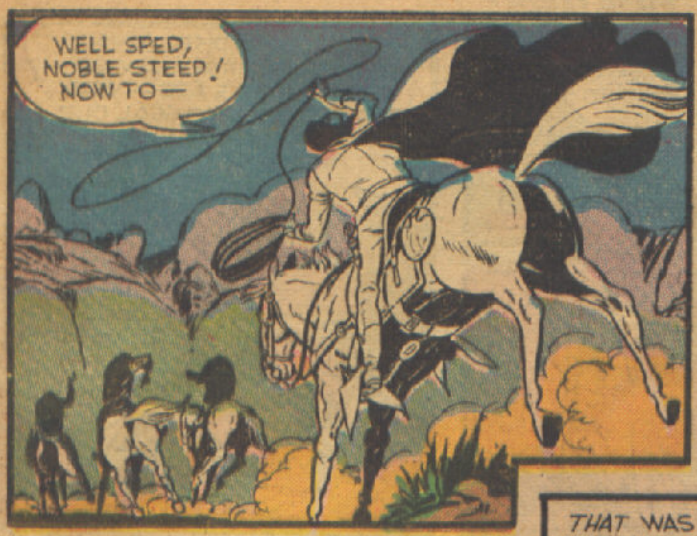
HEADLESS MEN, LET'S GIT GOIN' BACK TO OUR GRAVES NOW!


MEANWHILE
THAT STAGE COACH— WHY ISN'T IT MOVING? FORWARD, NOBLE STEED! IF THERE BE EVIL ABROAD, WE ARE THE ONES TO SCOTCH IT!

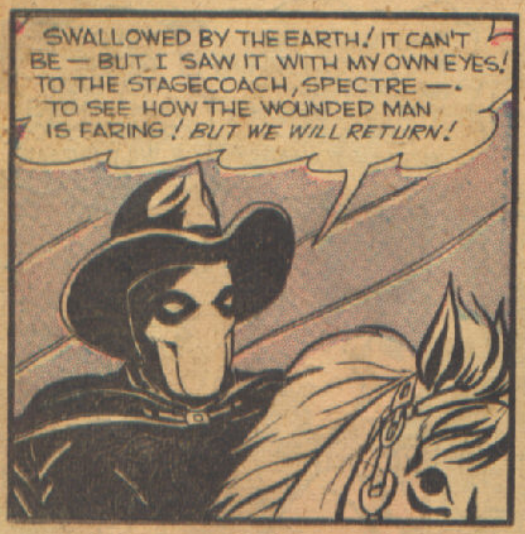
THEY WENT THAT WAY, GHOST RIDER! BE CAREFUL— THEY'RE DEMONS, FER SURE — WITHOUT HAIDS!
TEND TO THE WOUNDED MAN! DEMONS OR DESPERADOES, I WILL PURSUE THEM!


FASTER, SPECTRE, FASTER! THAT'S IT... WE'RE CLOSING IN ON THEM NOW... THUNDER! THEY ARE HEADLESS!


WHUP THEM HORSES! WHUP THEM! WE'RE ALMOST THERE — EVERYBODY KNOWS WHUT TO DO!


WELL SPED, NOBLE STEED! NOW TO—

BUT WHAT IS THE GHOST RIDER TO LASSO—THE THIN NIGHT AIR?
THEY'VE DISAPPEARED!

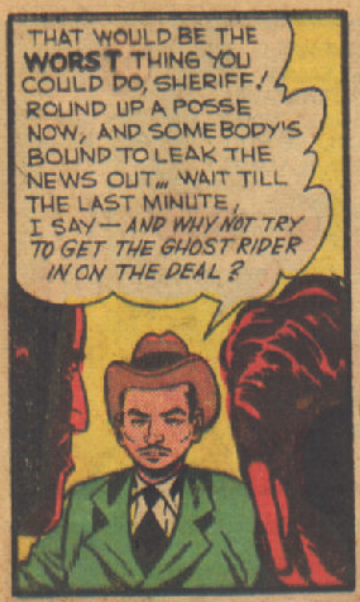

SWALLOWED BY THE EARTH! IT CAN'T BE — BUT I SAW IT WITH MY OWN EYES! TO THE STAGECOACH, SPECTRE —. TO SEE HOW THE WOUNDED MAN IS FARING! BUT WE WILL RETURN!

THAT WAS THE GHOST RIDER WHO ALMOST CAUGHT US, MEN! NOW THE GOL-DURNED CRITTER'S GONNA BE ON OUR TRAIL TILL HE ROUNDS US UP — IF WE DON'T GIT HIM FIRST, THET IS!

GO TELL PALOVER HE BETTER GIT HERE PRONTO! THIS TIME HE'S GOTTA HELP US PLAN HOW TO TRAP THE GHOST RIDER!

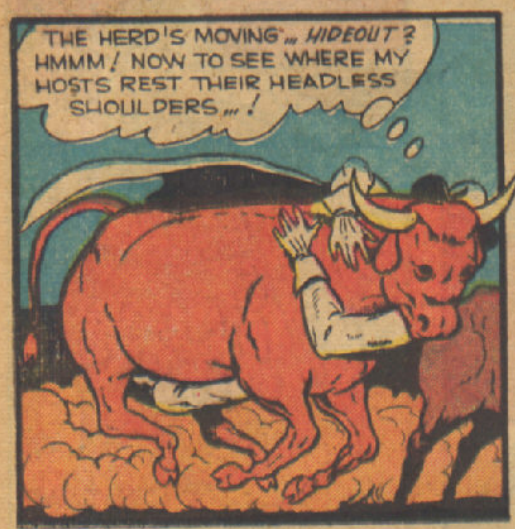
THE NEXT MORNING—
I'M SHORE GLAD YUH BROUGHT THIS NOTE HERE, MR. PALOVER.
THERE WASN'T ANYTHING ELSE TO DO, SHERIFF. THOSE HEADLESS HORSEMEN ARE DEMANDING A HUNDRED HEAD OF MY CATTLE OUT AT THE NORTH END OF MY RANCH THIS MIDNIGHT— WHAT'LL THEY BE AFTER NEXT?

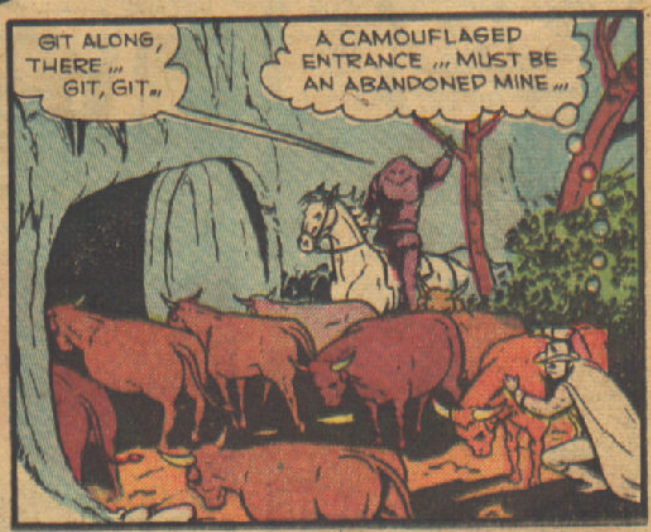
I SAY HAVE THE CATTLE THERE! IT'S A CHANCE TO LAY AN AMBUSH FOR THE OWLHOOTS!
YUH SHORE GOT SOMETHIN' THERE, REX— I'LL GO OUT RIGHT NOW AND ROUND UP A POSSE...


THAT WOULD BE THE WORST THING YOU COULD DO, SHERIFF! ROUND UP A POSSE NOW, AND SOMEBODY'S BOUND TO LEAK THE NEWS OUT... WAIT TILL THE LAST MINUTE, I SAY — AND WHY NOT TRY TO GET THE GHOST RIDER IN ON THE DEAL?

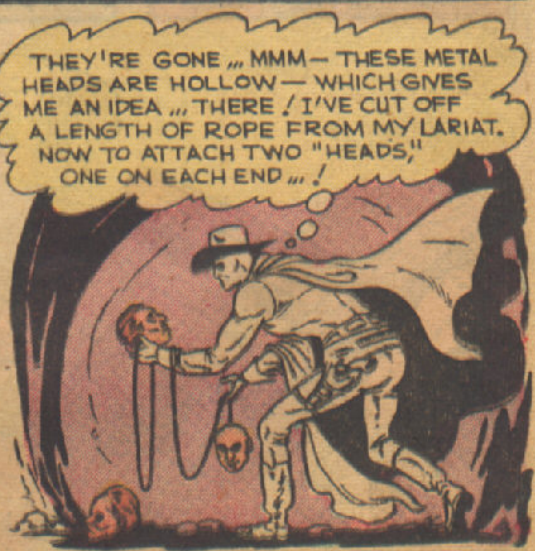
WHY NOT, SHERIFF? I THINK THAT'S A MIGHTY FINE IDEA!
AS THE GHOST RIDER, I MAY HAVE A SURPRISE OR TWO IN STORE FOR THE HEADLESS HORSEMEN TONIGHT...

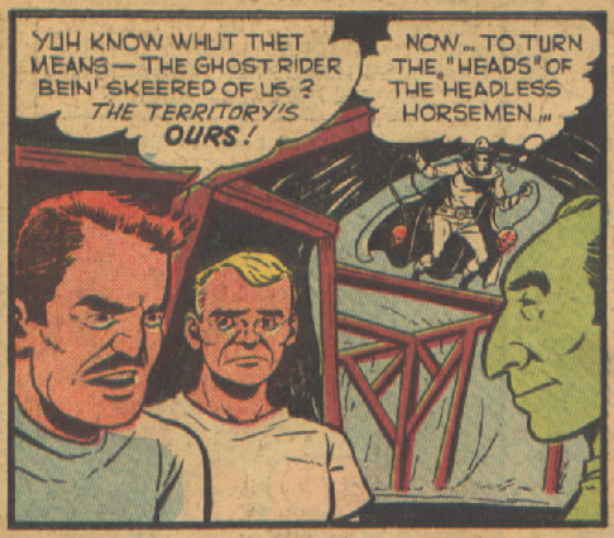
MIDNIGHT COMES... THE CATTLE ARE MILLING ABOUT RESTLESSLY... THE HEADLESS HORSEMEN HAVE ARRIVED... BUT WHERE IS THE GHOST RIDER?
LOOKS LIKE HE AIN'T SHOWING UP! IF THAT MEANS THE GHOST RIDER'S SKEERED OF US, IT'S ALL TO THE GOOD! NOW LET'S MOVE THE STEERS TO THE HIDEOUT...


THE HERD'S MOVING... HIDEOUT? HMMM! NOW TO SEE WHERE MY HOSTS REST THEIR HEADLESS SHOULDERS...!

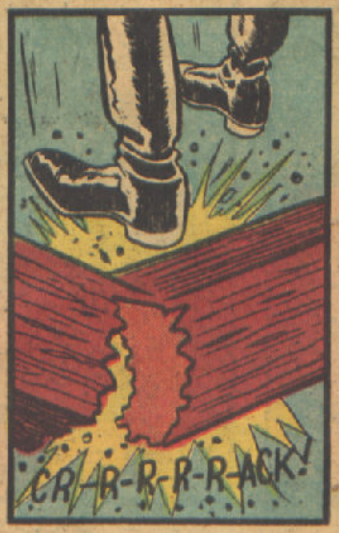

GIT ALONG, THERE... GIT, GIT...
A CAMOUFLAGED ENTRANCE... MUST BE AN ABANDONED MINE...

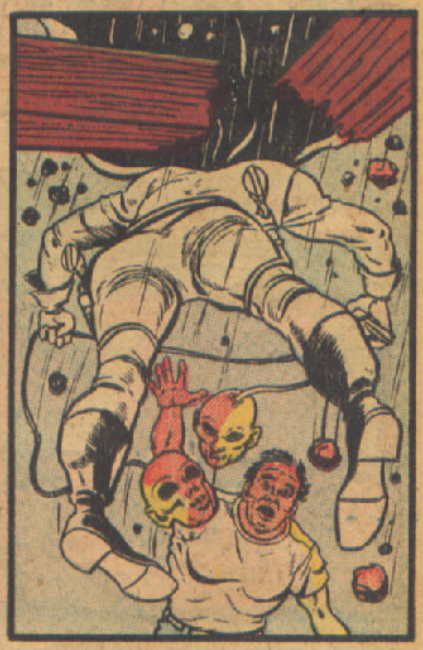
SOON AS YOU'RE THROUGH SHUCKIN' OFF THE SPOOK GIT-UPS, COME INSIDE, MEN. WE GOT MORE PLANNIN' TO DO!


THEY'RE GONE... MMM — THESE METAL HEADS ARE HOLLOW — WHICH GIVES ME AN IDEA... THERE! I'VE CUT OFF A LENGTH OF ROPE FROM MY LARIAT. NOW TO ATTACH TWO "HEADS," ONE ON EACH END...!



BUT AS THE GHOST RIDER CONFRONTS THE CROWDED VILLAINS ——

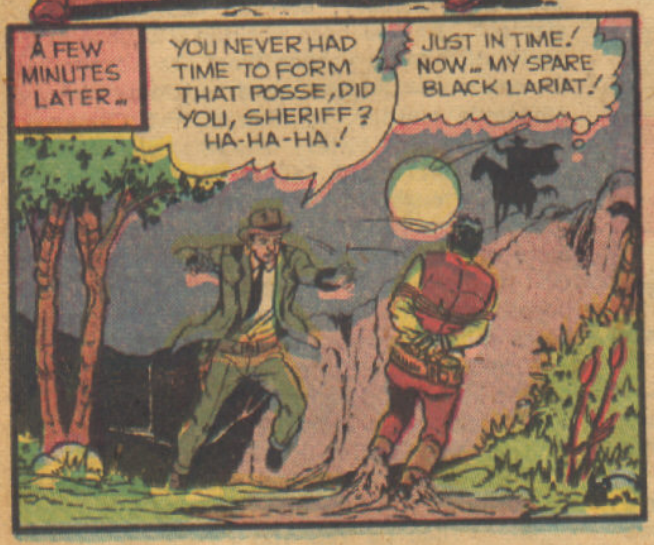


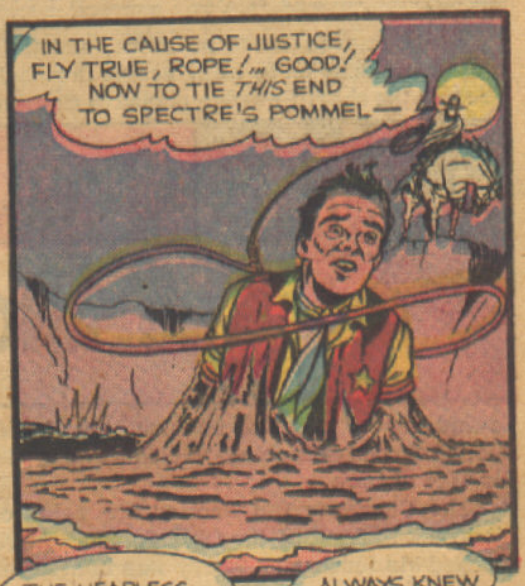


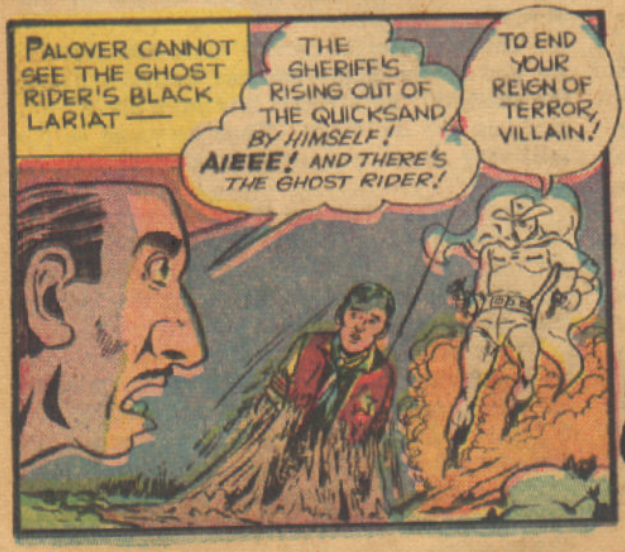
NOT QUITE THE END— THANKS TO MY IMPROVISED ARGENTINE BOLAS!

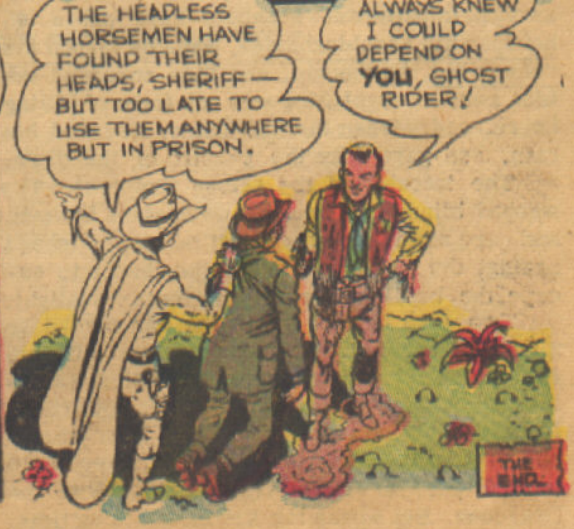
HIS SPIRIT BROKEN, THE GANG LEADER BABBLES—
THE SPOOK GIT-UP WAREN'T OUR IDEA, GHOST RIDER— YUH GOTTA BELIEVE ME! IT WAS SIMON PALOVER'S. HE DID ALL OUR PLANNING. RIGHT NOW, HE'S IN QUICKSAND CANYON, GETTING RID OF THE SHERIFF...

SPECTRE! SPECTRE! COME, WE MUST GET TO QUICKSAND CANYON!


A FEW MINUTES LATER...
YOU NEVER HAD TIME TO FORM THAT POSSE, DID YOU, SHERIFF? HA-HA-HA!
JUST IN TIME! NOW... MY SPARE BLACK LARIAT!


IN THE CAUSE OF JUSTICE, FLY TRUE, ROPE!... GOOD! NOW TO TIE THIS END TO SPECTRE'S POMMEL—


PALOVER CANNOT SEE THE GHOST RIDER'S BLACK LARIAT—
THE SHERIFF'S RISING OUT OF THE QUICKSAND BY HIMSELF! AIEEE! AND THERE'S THE GHOST RIDER!
TO END YOUR REIGN OF TERROR, VILLAIN!


THE HEADLESS HORSEMEN HAVE FOUND THEIR HEADS, SHERIFF— BUT TOO LATE TO USE THEM ANYWHERE BUT IN PRISON.
ALWAYS KNEW I COULD DEPEND ON YOU, GHOST RIDER!
THE END

The Cherokee Kid walked his cream pony into Hardtack, the walnut butts of his worn Colts bobbing easily at his hips. His face, tanned by the suns of plains and desert, was flat of cheek and tight of lip. There was a wild, hunted look in his narrowed eyes, for there was a price on the Kid's head. He was a wanted man, and he was riding into Hardtack to commit a murder.

He eyed the dry falsefronts of saloons and general stores with a feeling that he had seen the town in a dozen other places, from the Rio to the wide Missouri. This was the first time he had walked the cream pony through these streets, though.

"One western town is just like another, far's looks go," he told himself, and then he saw Red Cameron.

Cameron was a lean man, with extremely wide shoulders. He lounged against a post near a hitchrail, idly staring at the Cherokee Kid. The Kid thought, He knows me, all right. He knows I'm wanted, and that there's a reward on me!

But Cameron made no move, and the Kid walked his pony on by him, seeing the sunlight flash on the sheriff's badge pinned to Cameron's

OUTLAW'S VENGEANCE

cowhide vest. After a moment, the Hardtack sheriff turned aside and walked on toward the far side of town.

The Cherokee Kid knotted his reins on a hitchrack in front of the Okay Saloon. A frown touched his forehead. Worry was in him, and a savage impatience. I should have put a .45 between his shoulderblades, when he turned his back to me, he thought, and then shrugged the idea away. Drygulching was one form of killing he refused. When the Kid killed, he faced his man, and gave him the benefit of the draw.

The interior of the saloon was cool. The warped blinds had been drawn against the sun, and here and there men sat at tables, or leaned against the long bar, glad of the chance to escape the broiling heat of the Texas sunlight.

Two men bellied up to the bar turned to glance at the Kid. He touched them with his eyes, and let his glance move aside, to the elkhorns above the big bar mirror, not letting them see that he knew them. Big John Morris and Randy Talbott. Like the Kid, they were wanted, here and there from Fort Cobb to the Dragoons. But where the Kid faced his victims, Big John and Randy threw their lead from cover, if they could.

Big John was muttering as the Kid drank. A word or two floated to his ears. He paid no attention until Randy's voice lifted in protest, "...you mean, right out where everybody can see us?"

"Hush, you fool! I tell you...can't fail! Get him from...in the corner of the corral...comes past at nine-thirty on his rounds...shoot from the balcony..."

The Kid put his eyes on his half-filled glass. Only one map in town "made his rounds". It would be Sheriff Cameron they were talking about, planning his murder. The Cherokee Kid stifled a chuckle, but it was funny.

Red Cameron was the reason the Kid had come to Hardtack. He meant to beard the sheriff in his own home town and shoot him down, as Cameron had shot down Luke Mooney, who had run with the Kid over the border on those cattle rustling deals. In the years between those trips with Luke Mooney, the Kid had tried to go straight. He had been working at it, had made application for a pardon from the Territorial Governor — and then word had come of Luke Mooney's murder, by sheriff Red Cameron.

The Kid was bitter. His lips twisted as he watched Morris and Talbott walk from the saloon. He ought to upsaddle and ride out of town. Those two killers would bring Cameron down with bullets in his back, before midnight. One of them would be stationed at the corral beyond the millinery store. The other would be on some balcony.

The Cherokee Kid made a wry face. It was not the kind of killing he liked. If a man needed a lead passport to Boot Hill, he ought to see the man who was handing it to him!

"Doggone if I ain't got a notion to go see Cameron an' tip him off!" he told his empty glass. "Then I'd tell him I'd be gunnin' for him, come sunup!"

The humor of the thought made him chuckle. He slid a coin on the bar and walked out into the sunlight. He strolled idly down the street, studying the buildings. When he came to the millinery store and its adjoining corral, he turned.

There was a balcony above the overhang of the Federal Queen Hotel. Three windows led out from hotel rooms onto that balcony. The Kid stood in the sunlight staring at the balcony until sweat ran down inside his shirt.

Then he walked across the street and took a room for the night. "A front room," he told the clerk, "with a window fronting the balcony."

"Ain't no parades due in town tonight, is there?" asked the clerk. "Another gent wanted a front room earlier today."

"Mebbe he's like me," grinned the Kid. "I like to watch the sun rise."

He went up to the room and washed. Then he lay down and rested until a shaft of moonlight touched the window. He got up then and opened it to the full. He looked out at the balcony, frowning a little.

It was seven-thirty by his nickel watch. He went out of the hotel and found a restaurant, where he ate steak and potatoes and drank three cups of steaming java.

He chewed a toothpick as he walked back to the hotel. It was nine o'clock. Kerosene lamps from the saloons made a broad white ribbon of Hardtack's broad main street. A man will stand out against that like he was painted on it, he thought. Sheriff Red Cameron would die this night. He made too good a target to miss. The Cherokee Kid hefted his heavy Colts and went into the hotel.

He stayed in his unlighted room until he heard the window of the adjoining room being lifted. Then he stalked silently to the window and stood there, watching Randy Talbott ease himself out on the wooden-floored balcony.

Talbott went to the rail and drew his gun. His attention was caught and held by something moving in the bright, moonlit street below. It was easy for the Cherokee Kid to slip out on the wooden planks, some feet from him.

"Howdy, Randy."

Randy Talbott made a choking sound deep in his throat. He whirled, and his eyes were round, and the barrel of his gun wavered.

"You gunnin' for me?" asked the Kid pleasantly, waving a hand at the naked Colt.

Talbott was caught ahd twisted in surprise. He shook his head, mumbling, "'Course not. Just -er- lookin' at the moon."

The Kid stepped to the rail. Cameron was below, across the street. It was nine-thirty.

In the slatted shadows of the corral, a big figure rose up, gun in hand. On the balcony, the Cherokee Kid moved his hand, and a Colt was belching a red stream of fire downwards. Then he whirled and slammed the hot barrel against the cheek of Randy Talbott.

Talbott went back off his spurred boots. He fell with a snarl on his lips, and he shot as he fell.

He shot, but he did not shoot to kill. Wonderingly, the Kid saw Talbott moan and clutch at his shattered arm. The Kid put his gun back in its holster and told the night, "I shot at his arm. I shot him in the arm — where I aimed!"

"Hey, you — up there! Climb down here — pronto!"

The Kid lifted his arms and went to the rail. He called down, "Hold yore horses, Cameron. I got a wounded hombre up here named Talbott. You know him?"

A sound of cursing came from the street. Then the voice floated up again. "You stay there. I'll be up!"

It would have been easy to shoot Red Cameron as he climbed out the window. But the Kid had hooked his thumbs in his gunbelt and he let them stay there. Cameron put a fist to the shirt of the wounded Talbott and yanked him to his feet.

He said, "Randy Talbott! Huh, should have known I'd find you around when I saw the Kid shoot your sidekick, Morris, just as he was fixin' to gun me down!" He turned to the Kid with a wry smile. "I had you tabbed wrong, Kid, I'd a hunch you was after me when you rode in today!"

The Kid said slowly, "I was. You shot my partner, Luke Mooney. I — "

The sheriff shook his head. "I didn't do it. The story got around I did, but it was Morris and Talbott. I'd been in town, hunting him, but never saw him until it was — too late."

"Reckon I'm plumb glad I didn't go gunning for you, then," smiled the Kid.

"I got a better reason than that, Kid," said Cameron. He took a paper out of his pocket and handed it to the Kid. "Your pardon. It got mailed to me by mistake. I didn't know whether to give it to you or not. I wasn't sure about you — until now."

Cameron went on, "If you'd killed me, you'd never have had it, Kid. You'd have been an outlaw the rest of your life!"

THE END

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AS AMENDED BY THE ACTS OF MARCH 3, 1933, AND JULY 2, 1946 (Title 39, United States Code, Section 233) OF TIM HOLT, published bi-monthly at St. Louis, Missouri for October 1st, 1951.

1. The names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are:

Publisher, MAGAZINE ENTERPRISES, 11 Park Place, New York 7, N. Y.

Editor, RAYMOND C. KRANK, 11 Park Place, New York 7, N. Y.

Managing Editor, NONE.

Business Manager, SALLY R. HENDERSON, 11 Park Place, New York 7, N. Y.

2. The owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also, immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, its name and address, as well as that of each individual member, must be given.) Magazine Enterprises, 11 Park Place, New York 7, N. Y. Vincent Sullivan, 11 Park Place, New York 7, N. Y.

3. The known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (If there are none, so state.) None.

4. Paragraphs 2 and 3 include, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting; also the statements in the two paragraphs show the affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner.

SALLY R. HENDERSON,
Business Manager

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 26th day of September, 1951.

THEODORE MARVIN,
Notary Public, State of New York
No. 03-7747800. Qualified in Bronx Co.
Certificates filed with Bronx & New York County Clerks & Reg.
Commission Expires March 30, 1952.

TIM HOLT

IN THE EARLY DAYS OF THE OLD WEST, BANDS OF WILD HORSES WERE AN ACTUAL MENACE TO THE RANCHERS. ONE SUCH BAND WAS LED BY A GREAT BRONZE SORREL STALLION CALLED—

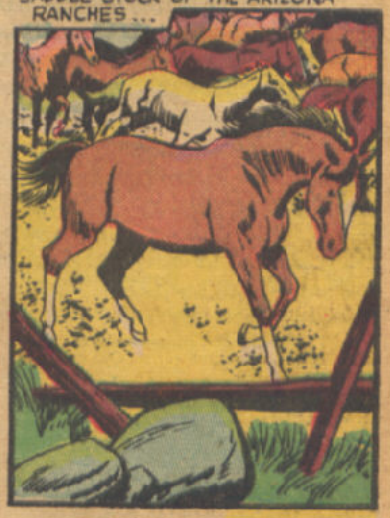
"SUN DANCE!"

FRANK BOLLE

THE WILD HORSES SMASHED DOWN FENCES...

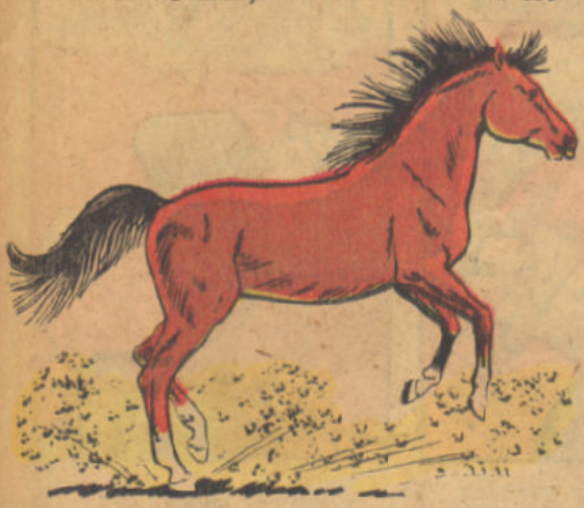
THEY TRAMPLED CROPS AND GRAIN...

BUT MORE SERIOUS THAN ALL THIS WERE THE DEPREDATIONS MADE BY THE WILD HORSES AMONG THE SADDLE STOCK OF THE ARIZONA RANCHES...

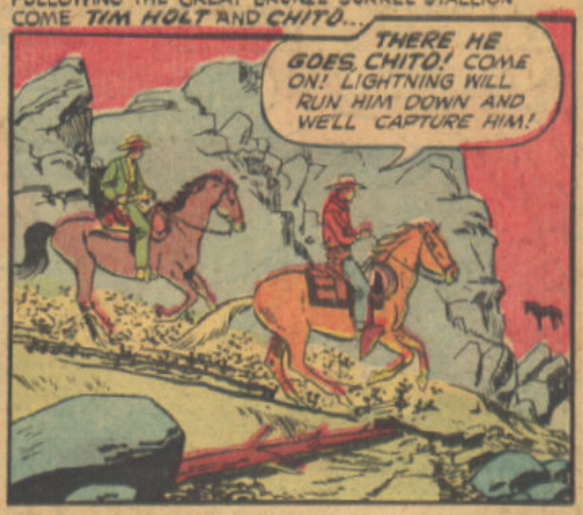


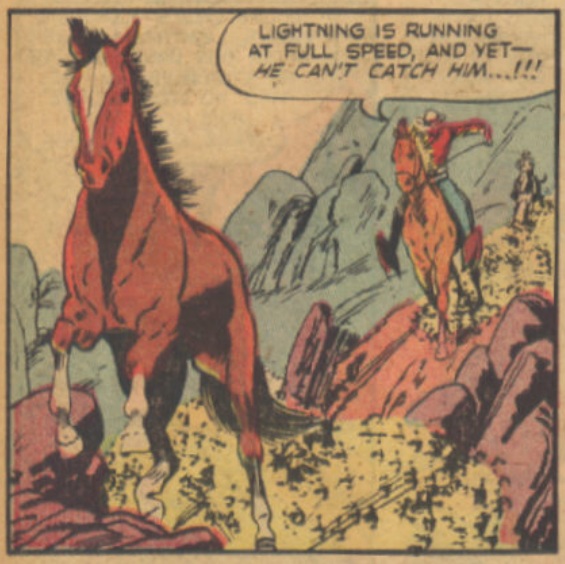
TIM HOLT

THIS IS ***SUN DANCE***, KING OF THE OUTLAW HORSES—

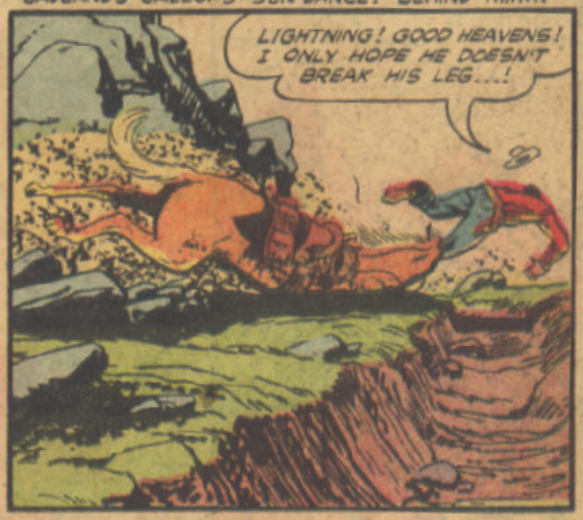


FOLLOWING THE GREAT BRONZE SORREL STALLION COME ***TIM HOLT*** AND ***CHITO***...

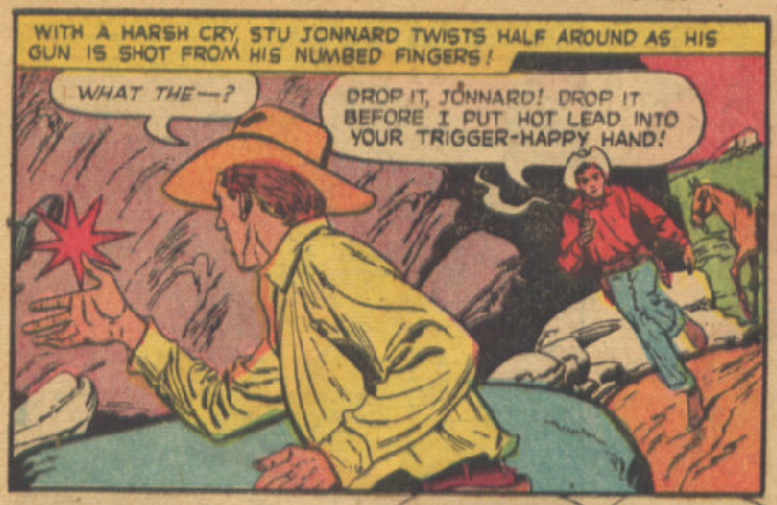




INTO THE ROUGH AND ROCKY TERRAIN OF THE BADLANDS GALLOPS SUN DANCE! BEHIND HIM...

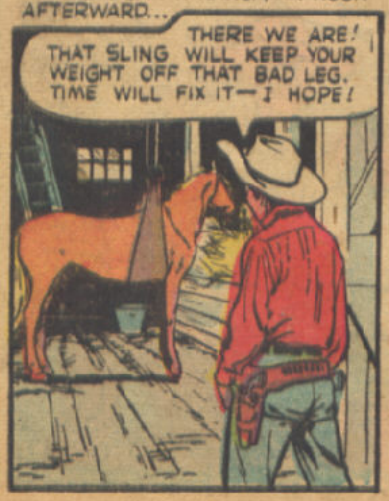


A FEW HUNDRED YARDS BEYOND THE FALLING PALOMINO, A HARDCASE GUNMAN NAMED ***STU JONNARD*** CLEARS LEATHER WITH HIS SIXGUN...



SOMEWHAT LATER...

AT THE T-BAR-H RANCH, AN HOUR AFTERWARD...

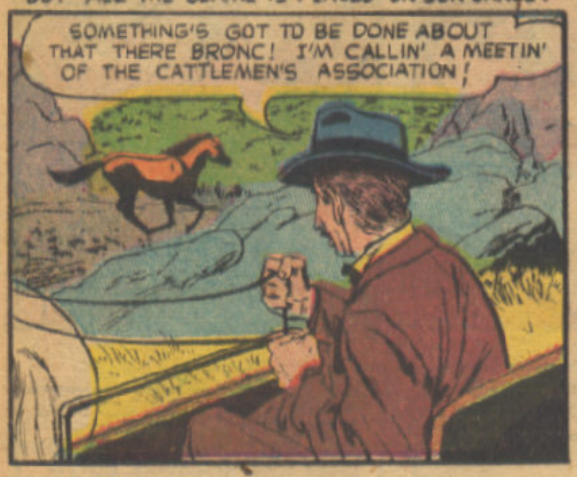


MEANWHILE, A THOROUGHLY SAVAGE STU JONNARD ARRIVES AT HIS LITTLE HORSE RANCH IN THE HILLS...

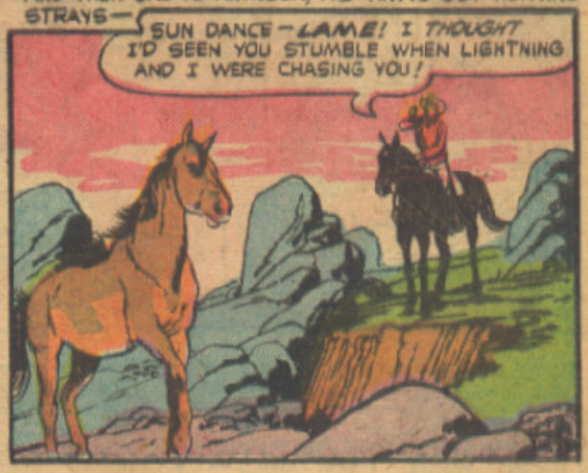
TIM HOLT

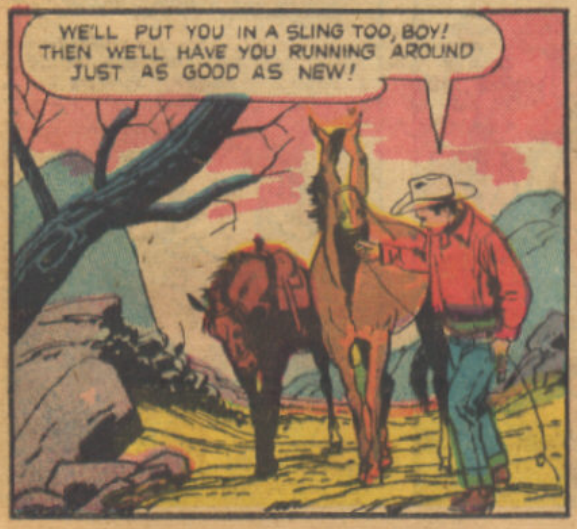
IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOW, STU JONNARD AND HIS HARDCASE RIDERS DRIVE THEMSELVES RECK-LESSLY, AND WHERE THEY GO, THEY STEAL GOOD SADDLE HORSES...

BUT ALL THE BLAME IS PLACED ON SUN DANCE!



AND THEN ONE AFTERNOON, AS TIM IS OUT HUNTING STRAYS—

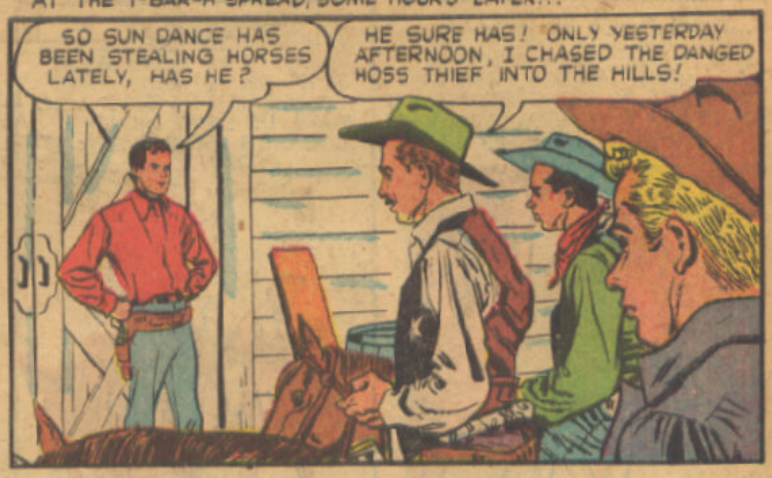




SOME DAYS LATER, IN A SECOND-STORY ROOM IN A BULLET HOTEL—

TIM HOLT

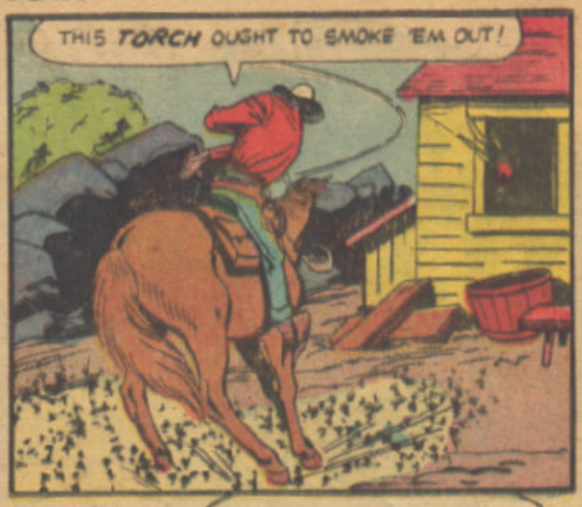
AT THE T-BAR-H SPREAD, SOME HOURS LATER...



SOME HOURS AFTERWARD, FAR OUT IN THE OPEN RANGE —

LESS THAN HALF A MILE AWAY...

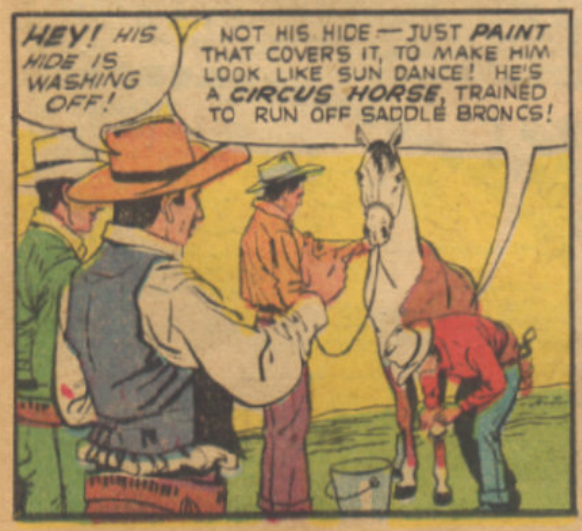
AT THE GALLOP, TIM AND THE CATTLEMEN RIDE IN ON JONNARD'S HORSE RANCH, POURING IN A SHEET OF HOT LEAD—
WE HAVE THEM HOLED UP! SHOOT AT THE WINDOWS—AND KEEP THEM FROM FIRING AT US!

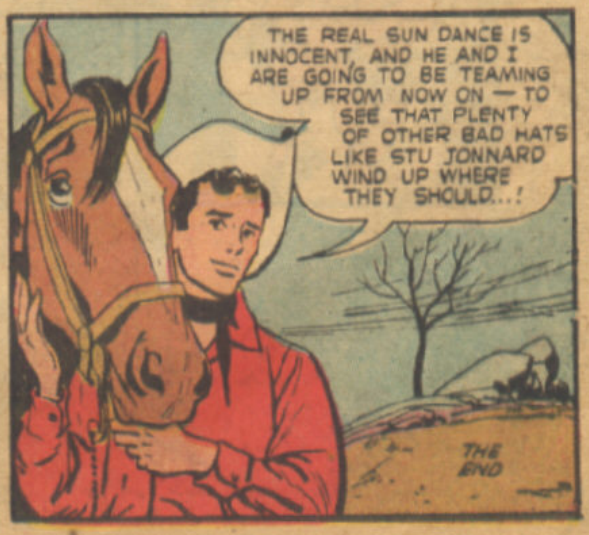

THIS TORCH OUGHT TO SMOKE 'EM OUT!

GOT ME—IN THE ARM! COUGH! COUGH! BETTER GET OUTSIDE...!
COUGH! COUGH!

KEEP COMING! WE'LL TREAT YOUR WOUND OUT IN THE OPEN, JONNARD! WE WANT YOU TO BE IN GOOD SHAPE WHEN WE PUT YOU BEHIND BARS!

NOW LET'S FIND OUT ABOUT THIS BRONC THAT LOOKS SO MUCH LIKE SUN DANCE...!
HUH? WHAT YUH GOT SOAP AND BRUSH FOR, TIM?


HEY! HIS HIDE IS WASHING OFF!
NOT HIS HIDE—JUST PAINT THAT COVERS IT, TO MAKE HIM LOOK LIKE SUN DANCE! HE'S A CIRCUS HORSE, TRAINED TO RUN OFF SADDLE BRONCS!


THE REAL SUN DANCE IS INNOCENT, AND HE AND I ARE GOING TO BE TEAMING UP FROM NOW ON—TO SEE THAT PLENTY OF OTHER BAD HATS LIKE STU JONNARD WIND UP WHERE THEY SHOULD...!
THE END

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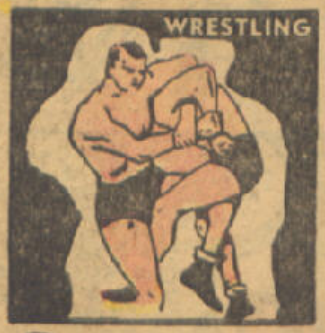

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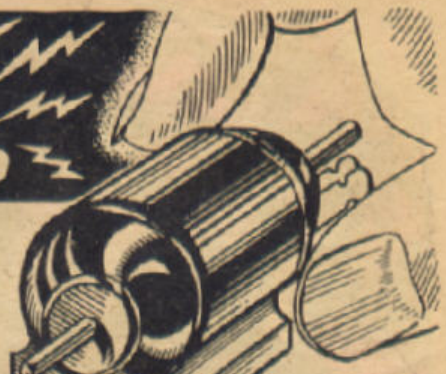

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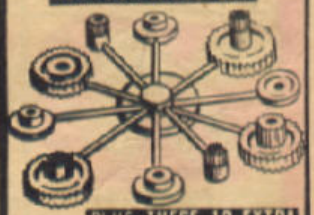

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